

PATENT

Application No. 09/267,469
Attorney Docket No.: 98-092C L A I M A M E N D M E N T S
C L E A N F O R M✓
Cancel claims 51-59 without prejudice.

Amend claims 1-12, 14-22, 24-35 and 38-50 to read as follows.

1. (Amended) A method for providing a mailing list test service involving a plurality of postal mailing lists, each postal mailing list including information about a plurality of list members, the information including a postal address for each list member, the method comprising:

- (a) sending, for each postal mailing list in the plurality of postal mailing lists, an e-mail message to each of a subset of list members;
- (b) receiving a plurality of responses, each received response corresponding to an e-mail message sent in (a), each received response being associated with a list member from one of the subsets of list members; and
- (c) selecting for use, based on the responses received in (b), one of the plurality of postal mailing lists.

2. (Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
(d) selling the postal mailing list selected in (c).

3. (Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
(d) renting to another the postal mailing list selected in (c).

4. (Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
(d) mailing information via post to list members of the postal mailing list selected in (c).

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5. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said sending an e-mail message in (a) includes:

(i) sending, for a first postal mailing list in the plurality of postal mailing lists, a first e-mail message to a first member of the subset; and

(ii) sending, for the first postal mailing list in the plurality of postal mailing lists, a second e-mail message to a second member of the subset;

wherein the first e-mail message includes content different from the second e-mail message.

6. (Amended) The method of claim 5, further comprising:

(d) storing the responses received in (b).

7. (Amended) The method of claim 5, wherein at least one of the plurality of postal mailing lists contains a first set of mailing list content, and another of the plurality of postal mailing lists contains a second set of content, and wherein the selecting in (c) includes selecting at least one of the plurality of postal mailing lists based on mailing list content included in the e-mail messages sent in (a).

8. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein each response received in (b) includes a test identifier and a member identifier, and comprising the further steps of:

(d) retrieving a test record from a test database based on the received test identifier; and

(e) updating the retrieved test record to disclose, based on the received member identifier, that a response was received from a member associated with the member identifier.

9. (Amended) The method of claim 8, wherein each response received in (b) further includes a question identifier and an answer identifier.

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10. (Amended) The method of claim 9, wherein said selecting one of the plurality of postal mailing lists includes selecting based on the received question identifier and the received answer identifier.

11. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said selecting one of the plurality of postal mailing lists includes:

- (i) determining a response rate of each of the plurality of postal mailing lists; and
- (ii) selecting the postal mailing list that has a response rate higher than the response rates of the other postal mailing lists.

12. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said receiving responses includes detecting the use of a uniform resource locator embedded in the e-mail message.

14. (Amended) An apparatus for providing a mailing list test service, comprising:

- (a) a processor;
- (b) a database including a plurality of postal mailing lists, each postal mailing list having information about a plurality of list members, the information including a postal address for each list member;
- (c) a port coupled to said processor; and
- (d) a memory including a database, said memory coupled to said processor, and said memory storing instructions adapted to be executed by said processor, the instructions including:
 - (i) sending, for each postal mailing list in the plurality of postal mailing lists, an e-mail message to each of a subset of list members;
 - (ii) receiving a plurality of responses, each received response corresponding to an e-mail message sent in (i), each received response being associated with a list member from one of the subsets of list members; and
 - (iii) selecting for use, based on the responses received in (ii), one of the plurality of postal mailing lists.

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15. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said memory stores further instructions adapted to be executed by said processor, said further instructions including:

(iv) selling the postal mailing list selected in (iii).

16. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said memory stores further instructions adapted to be executed by said processor, said further instructions including:

(iv) renting to another the postal mailing list selected in (iii).

17. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said memory stores further instructions adapted to be executed by said processor, said further instructions including:

(iv) mailing information via post to members of the postal mailing list selected in (iii).

18. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the instructions to send an e-mail message include instructions adapted to be executed by a processor to:

send, for a first postal mailing list in the plurality of postal mailing lists, a first e-mail message to a first member of the subset; and

send, for the first postal mailing list in the plurality of postal mailing lists, a second e-mail message to a second member of the subset, wherein the first e-mail message includes content different from the second e-mail message.

19. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 18, said memory storing further instructions adapted to be executed by said processor, the instructions including:

(iv) storing the responses received in (ii).

20. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 18, wherein one of the plurality of postal mailing lists contains a first set of mailing list content, and another of the plurality of postal mailing lists contains a second set of mailing list content, and wherein selecting in (iii) includes selecting one of the plurality of postal mailing lists based on mailing list content included in the e-mail messages sent in (i).

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21. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein selecting in (iii) further includes:

(i) determining a response rate of each of the plurality of postal mailing lists; and
(ii) selecting a postal mailing list from the plurality of postal mailing lists that has a response rate higher than the response rate of the other postal mailing lists.

22. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 14, said database including a mailing list database containing a member identifier, a test database containing a test identifier, a questions database, an answer database, and said memory storing further instructions adapted to be executed on said processor, the further instructions including:

(iv) retrieving a test record from the test database based on a received test identifier; and
(v) marking the retrieved test record to disclose, based on the member identifier, that a response was received from a list member associated with the member identifier.

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24. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein instructions to select a postal mailing list from the plurality of postal mailing lists include instructions to: determine the response rate of each of the plurality of postal mailing lists; and select the postal mailing list with the highest response rate.

25. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said receiving responses includes detecting the use of a URL embedded in the e-mail message.

26. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein a list member associated with a received response is compensated for the response.

27. (Amended) A medium storing instructions adapted to be executed by a processor to provide a mailing list test service for a plurality of postal mailing lists, each postal mailing list including information about a plurality of list members, the information including a postal address for each list member, said instructions comprising:

(a) sending, for each postal mailing list in the plurality of postal mailing lists, an e-mail message to each of a subset of list members;

(b) receiving a plurality of responses, each received response corresponding to an e-mail message sent in (a), each received response being associated with a list member from one of the subsets of list members; and

(c) selecting for use, based on the responses received in (b), one of the plurality of postal mailing lists.

28. (Amended) The medium of claim 27 storing further instructions adapted to be executed by a processor, said further instructions comprising:

(d) selling the postal mailing list selected in (c).

29. (Amended) The medium of claim 27 storing further instructions adapted to be executed by a processor, said further instructions comprising:

(d) renting to another the postal mailing list selected in (c).

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30. (Amended) The medium of claim 27 storing further instructions adapted to be executed by a processor, said further instructions comprising:
(d) mailing information via post to members of the postal mailing list selected in (c).

31. (Amended) The medium of claim 27, wherein the instructions to send an e-mail message in (a) include further instructions adapted to be executed by a processor to:
(i) send, for a first postal mailing list in the plurality of postal mailing lists, a first e-mail message to a first member of the subset; and
(ii) send, for the first postal mailing list in the plurality of postal mailing lists, a second e-mail message to a second member of the subset,
wherein the first e-mail message includes content different from the second e-mail message.

32. (Amended) The medium of claim 31, said medium storing further instructions adapted to be executed by a processor to store the responses received in (b).

33. (Amended) The medium of claim 31, wherein one of the plurality of postal mailing lists contains a first set of mailing list content, and another of the plurality of postal mailing lists contains a second set of content, and wherein said selecting in (c) includes selecting one of the plurality of postal mailing lists based on mailing list content in the e-mail messages sent in (a).

34. (Amended) The medium of claim 33, wherein said selecting in (c) further includes:
(i) determining a response rate of each of the plurality of postal mailing lists; and
(ii) selecting the postal mailing list that has a response rate higher than the response rate of the other postal mailing lists.

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35. (Amended) The medium of claim 27, wherein each response received in (b) includes a test identifier and a member identifier, and wherein the medium includes further instructions adapted to be executed by a processor, said further instructions comprising:

- (d) retrieving a test record from a test database based on the received test identifier; and
- (e) marking the retrieved test record to disclose, based on the received member identifier, that a response was received from a member associated with the member identifier.

38. (Amended) The medium of claim 27, wherein said instructions to select a postal mailing list include instructions to:

- (i) determine the response rate of each of the plurality of postal mailing lists; and
- (ii) select the postal mailing list that has the highest response rate.

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39. (Amended) A system for providing a mailing list test service involving a plurality of postal mailing lists, each postal mailing list including information about a plurality of list members, the information including a postal address for each list member, the system comprising:

- (a) means for sending, for each postal mailing list in the plurality of postal mailing lists, an e-mail message to each of a subset of list members;
- (b) means for receiving a plurality of responses, each received response corresponding to an e-mail message sent in (a), each received response being associated with a list member from one of the subsets of list members; and
- (c) means for selecting for use, based on the responses received in (b), one of the plurality of postal mailing lists.

40. (Amended) The system of claim 39, further comprising:

- (d) means for selling the postal mailing list selected in (c).

41. (Amended) The system of claim 39, further comprising:

- (d) means for renting to another the postal mailing list selected in (c).

42. (Amended) The system of claim 39, further comprising:

- (d) means for mailing information via post to list members of the postal mailing list selected in (c).

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43. (Amended) The system of claim 39, wherein said means for sending an e-mail message in (a) includes:

(i) means for sending, for a first postal mailing list in the plurality of postal mailing lists, a first e-mail message to a first member of the subset; and

(ii) means for sending, for the first postal mailing list in the plurality of postal mailing lists, a second e-mail message to a second member of the subset, wherein the first e-mail message includes content different from the second e-mail message.

44. (Amended) The system of claim 39, further comprising:

(d) means for storing the received responses.

45. (Amended) The system of claim 44, wherein one of the plurality of postal mailing lists contains a first set of mailing list content, and another of the plurality of postal mailing lists contains a second set of mailing list content, and wherein said means for selecting includes means for selecting one of the plurality of postal mailing lists based on mailing list content included in sent computer based messages.

46. (Amended) The system of claim 45, wherein said means for selecting further includes:

(i) means for determining a response rate of each of the plurality of postal mailing lists; and

(ii) means for selecting the postal mailing list that has a response rate higher than the response rate of the other postal mailing lists of the plurality of postal mailing lists.

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47. (Amended) The system of claim 39, wherein each response received in
(b) includes a test identifier and a member identifier, and further comprising:

(d) means for retrieving a test record from a test database based on the
received test identifier; and

(d) means for marking the retrieved test record to disclose, based on the
received member identifier, that a response was received from a member associated with the
member identifier.

48. (Amended) The system of claim 47, wherein the responses received in
(b) further include a question identifier and an answer identifier.

49. (Amended) The system of claim 48, wherein said means for selecting
one of the plurality of postal mailing lists includes means for selecting based on the received
question identifier and the received answer identifier.

50. (Amended) The system of claim 49, wherein said means for selecting
one of the plurality of postal mailing lists includes:

(i) means for determining a response rate of each of the plurality of postal
mailing lists; and

(ii) means for selecting the postal mailing list that has the highest
response rate.